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PATENT

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-9 are pending. Claims 11-18 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

No new subject matter has been added to the application.

Amended claim 1 introduces a new technical feature "output data comprising at least one color". Support for this is found in the international publication no. WO 03/075215 A2, page 4, lines 23-27: "The CPSI rendered from Adobe can be configured in such a way that, instead of generating - as is customary- a whole color separation, color by color, the output data are generated for a first band for all different colors, then for a second band for all colors and so on".

Amended claim 1 also introduces an additional technical feature "the first output format is a bitmap suitable for driving a main output device". Support for this feature is found on page 2, line 34 et seq.: "The main output data has a format that is typically intended for high resolution, monochrome, binary marking engines, such as imagesetters and platesetters"

Amended claim 1 also introduces an additional technical feature "the second output format suitable for driving a proofing device". Support for this feature is found on page 3, lines 2-4: "The format of the auxiliary output data is typically used for proofers; it may be 720 dpi, contone, color managed, composite".

Claims 3 to 7 were slightly reformulated for more accurate wording.

Claim Objections

The objections to claims 1 and 8 have been overcome by the amendments to the claims.

Claim Rejections

Claims 11, 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101. Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Azima in view of Lucivero US 7,242,487. These rejections are rendered moot by the cancellation of the claims 11-18.

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-14 and 16-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Azima et al. US 6,252,676. This rejection is respectfully traversed as follows.

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In order to sustain a §102 rejection of independent claims 1 and 8, each and every feature of the claims must be taught by the reference.

Azima does not disclose that input data is processed in a band-by-band fashion.

Azima does mention the use of processing a page "having one or more separations" (Azima col. 3 lines 49-50). However, such separations are "raster data for each of the colors in a color image" (Azima col. 2 lines 25-56). According to the amended claims 1 and 8, such separations can not be interpreted as bands, since the bands are not separations but parts of separations (amended claim 1: "defining for each color a plurality of bands constituting the output data").

Since every feature of the independent claims is not taught by the Azima, the §102 rejection is overcome.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon has been reviewed but is not considered material to the patentability of the invention.

US 5,946,451 to Wilfried Helmut Soker discloses a method that "enables the cost beneficial intermediate storage of the entire printer's copy and the exposing of films and proofing outputs from the stored contone map without having to reinterpret the PostScript data each time" (Soker col. 3 lines 31-35). For this purpose "The printed page is divided into successive sections (zones). FIG. 5 in this patent shows the division of a printer's copy into bands and zones. The height of the bands and the width of the zones is arbitrary; however, it is advantageous for the processing when the bands are all of the same height and the zones are all of the same width" (Soker col. 5 line 63 to col. 6 line 3).

Soker also teaches "a cost beneficial intermediate storage of the entire printer's copy and the exposing films and proof outputs from the stored contone map without having to reinterpret the PostScript data each time" (col. 3 lines 31-35). This is achieved by "a method with which a compressed and overlay-free contone map (delta list) is generated with little memory outlay and compression and wherein decompression and exposing can be carried out at high speed" (col. 3 lines 27-32).

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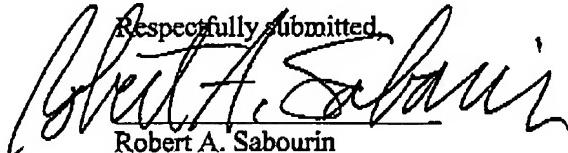
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The currently amended claims were written to take into account the new prior art including Soker. Soker and the current application solve roughly the same problem, specifically avoiding redundant processing and reducing memory requirements if an input file is to be used for output on multiple printers. A key difference between the two inventions, however, is that in Soker this object is achieved by storing the complete output data resulting from processing input data in a compressed format, whereas in the current invention, the processing is done in bands which are immediately sent to a main and a proofing output device so that the complete output data does not have to be stored at all.

No fees are believed to be due with this response. However if the Office deems otherwise, please charge any fees due to Deposit Account No. 13-3377 under this general authorization.

It should be noted that the above arguments are directed towards certain patentable distinctions between the claims and the prior art cited. However, the patentable distinctions between the pending claims and the prior art cited are not necessarily limited to those discussed above.

In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments, it is respectfully submitted that each rejection of the Office Action has been addressed and overcome so that this application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, withdraw the rejections and/or objections, and pass the application to issue. Should questions arise during examination, the Examiner is welcome to contact the applicant's attorney as listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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